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American Church
Situation

Collegiality and
Bishops' Synod

Authority, Collaboration
and Service

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IT SEEMS TO ME

Towards Community

For the greater part of my long life as a priest I was preoccupied with attracting non-Catholic inquirers and explaining how the Catholic faith answered their deepest human needs and aspirations. Priests like myself were alert to discern any sign of interest in Catholicism, whether it be idle curiosity or deep concern. We capitalized on these occasions as providential preparations for faith, as promising soil for the fertile seed of God's word.

I am profoundly grateful for the renewal in the Church which has deepened our grasp of the Church's nature and purified our sense of its mission. Consequently, I find it inexplicable that so many Catholics, frequently in posts of leadership, balk at the fact that the Church is primarily a community, and that they delay those structural changes which would make it a more effective instrument for the brotherhood of mankind. Because the need to achieve genuine, universal human community is felt more intensely and widely today than ever before.

Our savage racial hatreds generate moving pleas for unity, as when the black clergyman warned, at a simple service in honor of the murdered Martin Luther King, "it is either community or chaos!"

Sometimes the appeal for human solidarity requires exceptional courage. This occurred when the Russian physicist, Andrei D. Kakharov, conveyed his eloquent pamphlet to the West, asserting, "the division within mankind threatens it with destruction." After describing how we are imperiled by war, hunger, mass culture, bureaucratic dogmatism, demagogues, and the consequences of uncontrolled, rapid change, he pleaded: "only universal cooperation under intellectual freedom and lofty moral ideals will preserve civilization."

Occasionally, we are heartened by fleeting moments of unity, as when a young girl explained to a TV reporter in New York's Central Park at the moon landing of the American astronauts, "All peoples seem to have become one as never before in their concentration on this courageous human

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effort to achieve this magnificent goal!"

Every day, science and technology serve to shrink our world and make it physically one. Yet selfishness, insecurity, fear, greed, rivalries and suspicions create high walls that prevent moral unity. Human mastery gives us the instruments to extend education, peace, health, comfort and happiness to men on a wider scale than ever before. Yet the "have" nations and their affluent citizens clutch their wealth, while the "have-not" continents and their sympathizers feed the ever-widening revolution.

BABEL OR PENTECOST

Made by God to be one, yet always at each other's throats. Why? Herbert McCabe, in his excellent book "The People of God" explains:

"We are born with a constitutional inability to live together in love. . . . The nature in which we are born is twisted and tends to alienate us from each other. Whatever community we try to set up by purely human means . . . we fail to reach real unity. This is the story of Babel.

"St. Luke's account of Pentecost shows the way in which human community will be reached; with the coming of the Spirit of Christ, men who have hitherto been divided by language and culture come to understand one another. The teaching of the Bible is that the goal of mankind, real unity in love among men, can only be reached by dying to our injured human nature—the unity we have as members of Adam's race—and rising again to a new physical human community in the risen Christ."

Some Christians, reading the "sings of the times"—among which the anguished search for community is surely one of the most tragic and widespread—are less and less satisfied with a merely unreflecting conventional Christianity. Contemplating the needs of the world, and the deeper mysteries of the Christian heritage, these Christians seek renewal and reform. Membership in, or conversion to the institutional Church, does not exhaust the richer gifts Christ brought to men. In this connection,

listen to Alfons Auer, who in "Open to the world" reminds us:

"God destined man for love and community and man's likeness with God includes this destiny. Because God is not one alone, but a love-community, man too has to live in love and community. How else could he ever witness to the triune God here on earth? God is creative love and fruitfulness. And God wants to spread this fruitful love among men: he wants to manifest it, to make it visible and effective in mankind."

Catholics who grow nostalgic over the "good old days" of ghetto Catholicism might reflect on the more ancient, and much more confident days of St. Paul. Joseph Blenkinsopp, in "Jesus is Lord," well describes the priorities and purpose of the Apostle of the Gentiles. Paul was converted by an experience of the risen Christ, and he preached this experience of the crucified Christ, who is "now risen and present to us in community. . . . The end of all his activity was to set up communities of dedicated men and women committed to Christ, living the new life, the first of a new humanity."

TEACHING OF VATICAN COUNCIL II

In the light of all this, it is hardly surprising that Vatican Council II, in its *Constitution on the Church*, declares: "the Church is in Christ like a sacrament or sign and instrument of a very closely knit union with God and of the unity of the whole human race." Nor should it be astonishing that the Council's *Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* has a whole section on "The Community of Mankind," that it pledges the Church's influence to assist in the achieving of the universal brotherhood of man, and that it equates the Christian vocation with this precise goal.

Priests once dedicated to winning converts were sensitive not merely to propitious occasions for their apostolate, but also to evidences of opposition from without and hindrances from within the Church. We were acquainted not only with roads to Rome, but also with the roadblocks to understanding Catholicism and the many paths out of the Church. Coming out of that tradi-

tion, a veteran like myself has many moments of suppressed ire at the failure to get on speedily with the task of renewal and reform.

Certainly the world is in turmoil. Obviously the Church faces a severe crisis. But little is accomplished by wailing walls. In our situation, there is peril but also rich promise. Beneath the seeming chaos of our culture is a cry for universal brotherhood, and the deepest current running in the

Church is the painful effort to understand and achieve greater community in Christ. The weaknesses within the Church were often the most serious obstacle to the Church's mission. And today, unfortunately, it is the lack of vision and timidity in leadership that hampers our efforts to answer modern man's profoundest need out of the richest elements in our Christian heritage.

JOHN T. MCGINN, C.S.P.

The Situation in the American Church

Joseph V. Gallagher, C.S.P.

The self-evaluation process presently under way is designed to illuminate specific apostolic tasks for the Paulist Community. In order to identify some of these, a heavy emphasis has been laid upon fact-gathering within the various apostolates. However, it is obvious that no planning for the future can neglect to take into account the current situation in both Church and nation. This is the milieu in which whatever apostolic objectives are decided upon will have to be pursued. This is an exceedingly complex and changing picture and it would be presumptuous to say that it can be clearly delineated.

What follows is much more modest than that. These pages attempt to draw together the observations and conclusions of several qualified observers. Not all will agree with the picture that their findings represent and indeed these men lay no

claim to infallibility. However, it should be noted that all of them are trained social scientists and are approaching their analysis from a scientific and not a theological point of view. They are trying to "tell it like it is" and not seeking to impose their own theological views of Church reform. Of course, the latter are bound to influence their judgment to some degree, but the basic approach is empirical.

It is most important that we try to do the same thing. One may not like what is happening, but this will be no help in preventing it from happening. These findings are presented without any judgments about the desirability of the various components of the crisis we presently face. I hope that they will be studied in the same way.

The social scientists upon whom this picture depends are Father Andrew Greeley, Canon Francois Houtart, Professors

W. A. Osborne, Peter Berger, Thomas O'Dea and Robert Wegmann. The findings are theirs. This is the way they see it and this is the kind of situation in which the Paulist Community must perform its task. That task should, it seems obvious, be in part defined by the situation.

At the outset a word perhaps should be said about what business social scientists have in appraising religion. Is it legitimate for such persons to scrutinize the Church, draw conclusions and make predictions on the basis of their science? What can social scientists possibly have to say about the Catholic faith? Doesn't faith belong to an entirely different order beyond the reach of science? These are all legitimate questions that should be answered before one gives serious attention to what the social scientists have to say. Hence the following comments.

RELIGION AND FAITH

First, we have to recognize the difference between religion and faith. The latter is a gratuitous gift of God through which man enters into communion with him and shares the divine life. This gift and its acceptance, together with all that God has revealed of himself in the course of history cannot be examined in scientific terms, and the empirical sciences have nothing to say about it. Religion, however, is quite another thing. Religion is much broader than faith and includes all of the human things man does to express and live out his faith. Just the way we use the word "religion" indicates how broad is its meaning. We apply it indiscriminately to all kinds of religions, however bizarre, and whatever we may think of their content. The adjective "religious" is attached to all kinds of ordinary things like education and training in one's faith, the special language and practices that express faith, formal worship and devotional practices, general attitudes on social, civic, and cultural matters that are prompted by faith, institutions such as hospitals, orphanages, schools, seminaries, etc., established to promote objectives suggested by faith, forms of dress and diet, philosophies and other conceptual apparatuses for

thinking about faith, etc. The list is almost endless.

Obviously a great many of these in themselves are not so closely connected with faith that the latter could not survive when, as often happens, they are dropped. Religion is, often as not, the human embodiment and social systematization of particular beliefs and aspirations that come directly from one's faith. Because it inevitably involves such prosaic matters as organization and ideology, it is the kind of thing that the empirical scientists can deal with as easily as they can with other forms of human activity. This is not to say that they can analyze it exhaustively or make final judgments about it, because there are always areas of religion that lie beyond their reach. But for a good part of man's religious life, because it is a social and psychological phenomenon as well as a religious one, science can say a great deal, and if its observations are accurate and its methodology properly followed, the conclusions it reaches have as much validity as what the same sciences have to say about other human activities.

DIVINE GIFT AND HUMAN TASK

It is in this sense, namely religion as a human phenomenon as well as a divine gift, that we turn an attentive ear to the social scientists mentioned above. A good part of the Church's life is entangled in human affairs, and is as much affected by the events and developments of history as is any other social institution. All one has to do is read church history to see how much the Church has changed and been affected in the past. The present crisis differs only in its rapidity of development and tremen-

This is a background paper, sent to each of the Paulist Fathers. It is one of the documents designed to assist the members in undertaking an honest self-evaluation of the ministries of the Paulist Community.

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dous scope, both factors being the result of our shrinking world of space and time due to modern communications. The other great difference is the fact that *we* are part of this change and not spectators at some remote time reading about it in a history book. The two experiences can never be the same. However, it is quite probable that future readers of the history of the Church in the 20th century will be reading interpretations of what happened back in 1970 that won't sound very different from the following pages. The important difference is that they won't be able to do anything about it.

TWO CENTRAL ISSUES

There are two distinct factors behind the critical developments here in the Church at the present time and, one way or another, they enter into all of the crises building up around us. They are:

1. The religious reform undertaken by Vatican II, and the widening gap between it and the ecclesiastical reform required to implement it.
2. The world-wide process of secularization, i.e., the withdrawal of whole areas of society and culture from the direct influence of religion and religious institutions.

In addition to these, we can assume that all of the theological and cultural developments that affect the Church generally also enter into the picture here, as do the universally experienced changes that are being wrought by mass communications, advanced technology, urbanization, etc. Also, the various reform movements in American secular society and the conflicts they create, impinge upon the Church in many ways and often become a major factor in particular religious crises. In short, everything that is contributing to change in our modern world is part of the picture of Church change, too. However, we are particularly concerned here with certain religious developments that are having a direct and special impact on the Church.

Vatican II initiated a religious reform in the Church. By *religious* reform is meant a reshaping of Catholic life so as to conform

more closely to the faith and ideals the Church professes. There is always a gap between what the Church believes and the way she lives and as that gap widens, the Church periodically makes attempts to close it. Trent was one such attempt; Vatican II is another.

The basic religious reform of Vatican II was a shift from structure to value. Both structure and value are essential components of every society and they are both essential to the Church. However, they are never accorded equal importance in any society. Some societies emphasize one, others the other, and in the same society may shift the emphasis at different times in its own history. This is what has happened in the Church. From the Middle Ages on the Church laid increasing emphasis upon structure in her life. Thus it was that until recently, the individual Catholic habitually found his identity, formation and mission largely in structural terms, i.e., he followed the leader.

VALUES AND STRUCTURES

Vatican II changed direction and transferred the Church's primary emphasis to the *values* she espouses. Such a shift means that Catholic identity, formation and mission will now be arrived at by a different process than previously, and the shape and sound of Catholic life will be a whole lot different as a result. For example, before Vatican II the structure emphasis led Catholics to identify themselves as "belonging to the Church," — a structural concept. Today, you hear Catholics identifying themselves simply as "being Christian," thus reflecting a value approach (the value here being the following of Christ). This may seem like a fine point but the implications are great when it is applied across the board. *Everything looks different.* The shape of Catholic life is changed. A different working philosophy has been proclaimed by the Church.

Specifically, some of the things we may expect to see following from this are: a trend toward small groups in worship, education and apostolic activity. Why? Because when you try to shape your Christian life

around values instead of structures, you have to have the help and support of other people who are consciously trying to do the same thing. All founders of religious orders have discovered this. We may also expect a heightened personal responsibility in moral decision, increased lay initiative, women assuming more roles in the Church, priests and religious temporarily functioning in other roles, increasing diversity in the forms of Church life, parishes of voluntary membership, i.e., non-geographical, with which the smaller groups will be affiliated, etc. In short, the individual Catholic will no longer be asked to put his life together by playing follow the leader. Instead, he is asked to assume much more responsibility for his own personal growth. He is to strive after internalizing specific Christian values and follow the lines these open up before him. This calls for a much more personally responsible process, more diversity of expression, more temporary and flexible structures for limited and particular functions.

I have dwelt on this at some length because it is of the utmost importance that this distinct quality of the religious reform be understood for what it is. Otherwise, the current conflicts in the Church cannot be properly understood, and judgments about them will be made solely on the basis of theological positions, or what is worse, emotional prejudices.

INSTITUTIONAL REFORM

We now come to the matter of *ecclesiastical* reform mentioned above. By this phrase is meant simply the alteration of structures and institutions within the Church so as to conform to the new shape of Catholic life determined upon by the religious reform. Institutions exist in the Church in order to bring order and equilibrium into the activities and flow of Catholic life. Vatican II changed the flow, and it is now the task of the Church's institutions to bring a new equilibrium and order into the currents released by Vatican II. They cannot perform this function without major change since their present design is tailored to a situation where structure had

the primacy. In their present form they simply cannot bring order and equilibrium to a situation where Christian values are given the primacy. In fact, they contribute to disorder because in their present form they compete for first place with the values they are supposed to serve.

WIDENING GAP

At the present time in the U.S., there is a serious and widening gap between ecclesiastical reform and religious reform. The Church's new working philosophy of building Christian life primarily around Christian values has been welcomed and seized upon by many in the Church. It will be followed by many no matter what happens. Whether this will "edify" the Church or tear it apart depends in great part upon what happens in ecclesiastical reform. Right now the religious reform goes ahead, but it is becoming separated from the institutions. The American bishops as a group misunderstood their role in change. They seem to see it as primarily preserving the institutions instead of adapting them to the task of getting the *whole* Church into the mainstream charted by the religious reform. They are exhausting themselves and exacerbating tensions in attempting to retain the relative position of structure and value that existed before Vatican II.

As a result, the role of the official Church in the religious reform is marginal, and the two movements of religious and ecclesiastical reform are going on divergent paths. This has some very bad effects which are obvious around us and are likely to increase. Among them are the continuing outflow of frustrated priests and religious from the ministry and a decline in new vocations. There are other causes contributing to this loss as we shall see below, but the reform gap is a major factor. Also, as the gap widens, we can expect priests' associations to become more and more radical, and bishops to become more and more isolated from their priests and people. There will be more and bigger and noisier confrontations between clergy and laity and the hierarchy.

This is perhaps not all bad. Conceiva-

bly, the bishops may learn something about their proper role regarding change in the Church, and ecclesiastical and religious reform may begin to converge. The big danger is not so much conflict as a loss of interest on the part of those engaged in religious reform, and their falling off into secular areas of activity as a result. If this happens, there will be no pressure for ecclesiastical reform and it is even less likely to come.

The foregoing is simply an application to the contemporary Church of sociological principles that deal with structure and change in all societies. History indicates that this is what is to be expected and theology, of whatever sort, isn't going to change it.

CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

No one expects a mass exodus from the Catholic Church at this time. Instead, those who have gotten the message of religious reform and who are staying with it, are going ahead on their own and throwing together whatever informal structures they need to organize Catholic life in the new shape. Some of this is deliberately taking place outside the law and constitutes what is known as the "underground Church." Some of it is loosely related in an unofficial way to parishes or other regular forms of church organization but is visibly different from them. A very little of it is official. At the same time, large numbers of Catholics, easily the majority, are holding the line and following the official lead of the bishop, parish, chancery, etc. The problem here is that there is little leadership and what there is is piecemeal and peripheral. The ecclesiastical reform we are seeing thus far deals with details and procedures and follows the existing structural pattern. This is inevitable as long as the institutions themselves are not overhauled to serve their new task.

The result is that the real point of the *religious* reform is never dealt with and people grow confused, disappointed and exasperated over minor issues. What the Church institutions should be doing is helping *all* of the people into new value-oriented

forms of Christian life. Instead, they are consumed with indoctrinating people in the relatively insignificant details of the ecclesiastical reform. This is of little help and quite misleading. If it persists for a long period it may seriously weaken faith. All of the Church's resources in catechetics, liturgy and theology should be translating the basic Christian revelation into new forms of Christian living according to the norms of Vatican II. They are not doing this, and as a result certain things are happening to the faithful.

IMMEDIATE CONSEQUENCES

Life does not stand still when there is a failure of leadership. Events expand into the vacuum and begin to take charge. In this respect three major developments are very noticeable. They all involve important changes in very fundamental Catholic norms and none of them has ecclesiastical approval.

1. The Church's teaching on birth control as a certain norm of Catholic behavior has dissolved. This, it should be remembered, is a sociological observation and not a theological proposition. What it means is that it can no longer be said that all good Catholics accept the papal teaching on birth control without question. Also, because so much of Catholic self-understanding was structural, i.e., tied to authority, this change in the certainty of one norm is rapidly leading to the questioning of others. There is already a noticeable dissolution of faith in the infallibility of the Church. The absence of the kind of vigorous pastoral effort described above is being felt more acutely here.
2. The paralysis of the bishops and the course of ecclesiastical reform, or lack of it, is actually reshaping the Catholic understanding of the nature of ecclesiastical authority. Unquestioning obedience to the pope or bishop is no longer a Catholic norm. It is still too early to see what the new shape of ecclesiastical authority is going to be, but events

are showing us that it will have to include much more of the communication process than presently.

3. The Mass is taking on a new meaning both as a result of some specific emphases of Vatican II and the implementation they are receiving in the underground church and other experimental situations. The Mass is now coming to be seen as a function of community rather than a service to be attended. What this will mean in terms of attendance, liturgical forms, and the relation between worship and mission is not yet clear, but this is definitely the direction.

These changes in very important Catholic norms can be expected to produce certain specific developments. The laity and clergy will no longer accept the Church as an authoritative teacher in sexual matters, except in the most general way. More remarriage after divorce is probably coming. Clerical celibacy will be modified and married men will be ordained. If the ecclesiastical reform does not take hold so that the bishops can exercise genuine leadership, de facto leadership will pass to others; and the erosion of faith in infallibility will spread to all areas of Church teaching, and the possibility of a massive falling away will become very real.

THE SECULARIZING FACTOR

The process of secularization, that is part of contemporary history, adds to the problems of the reform. One major effect of secularization is that it presents people with a choice of explanations about the meaning of man and history. In the U.S., this pluralism is sharply felt. As a result, the Christian interpretation of reality comes to be seen as only *one* among many competing explanations, some religious, others humanist, determinist, etc. This process has been going on for a long time, and one of its effects has been to condition people generally to a tentative rather than an absolute acceptance of any one explanation,—a kind of “who-knows-the-others-may-be-right-after-all” kind of attitude.

In the current situation in the Church,

where her infallibility is being called into question for other reasons, this secularized view of religion compounds the uncertainty and reinforces doubt. Because of the pervasive attitude that religion is only one of several possible answers to ultimate questions, and because so much of Catholic life has been based on unquestioning acceptance of what comes from above, the current collapse of certain norms leads many people almost immediately to question everything in the Church without making distinctions. Secularization thus gives an overkill potential to relatively minor issues raised by ordinary social conflict situations in the Church. Once again, little is being done to aid people in handling this very dangerous crisis, and there seems to be little pastoral understanding of it.

MINISTRY AND IDENTITY

A side effect in the secularizing process is the decline in esteem in which the priesthood and religious life is held. As more and more areas are accepted to be outside the dominion of the Church and religious institutions, the specific function and importance of the priesthood and professional religious ministry become less certain. This creates self-doubt and leads to departure from the ministry. More important for the future, it also lessens the attractiveness of priestly and religious vocation. This trend will almost certainly continue until some new image of priestly and religious role takes fairly definite shape. As long as the celibacy issue remains unresolved an increase in vocations and a stabilized priesthood is unlikely.

Secularization would be a pastoral challenge under any conditions. Joined to the conflict situation in the Church today and the unanswered questions about the basis of Catholic faith the faithful are now asking, it could lead to disaster. A major pastoral effort,—the thing called “renewal”—is necessary to avert it.

If the foregoing analysis is correct, then certain inevitable questions suggest themselves to a religious community. Among them are:

1. If this is the direction of the Church

proclaimed by Vatican II how can any group be "in the vanguard" unless it fully espouses the religious reform?

2. How can it be said to espouse the reform of Vatican II unless it is itself grouped primarily around values instead of structures?
3. How can it be said to espouse the reform unless it is engaged in a major effort on all fronts to lead people into new value-oriented forms of Christian life?
4. How can it deny to qualified members temporary roles as change agents outside the traditional priesthood?
5. A missionary and priestly vocation takes shape in a young person today around a cluster of the Church's proclaimed *values* rather than around a *state* of life; and this not through personal whim but because the Church herself now describes vocation as such. Can anyone reasonably expect such a young person to follow a vocation anywhere but into a group that has visibly shaped its life around

these values? Would any post-Vatican II community *want* any other kind of vocation?

Certain other questions have to be asked, too, by pastors and others with pastoral responsibility:

1. How can a pastor today simply await the lead of a diocese? Isn't there an obligation to do everything possible to help people regroup around values and to address oneself specifically to the problems of faith they are experiencing? More specifically, how can those with pastoral responsibility *not* give priority to obtaining the best catechetical, liturgical, theological program possible? ("Possible" here means not simply in terms of the resources of the parish but procurable at any cost.)
2. How can responsible pastoral persons do anything but necessarily come at times into some conflict with ecclesiastical authority in the responsible discharge of their mission? Shouldn't this be recognized as part of the pastoral task today and accepted as such?

COLLEGIALITY AND ORTHODOXY

The teaching of Vatican II on the episcopal college is not in issue today. What is in issue is, how in practice the principal of collegiality should be made something more than a dead letter.

If orthodoxy is threatened, it is threatened rather by those who champion a theology which is barely reconcilable with the explicit teaching of Vatican II about collegiality and with the implications of that teaching.

Bishop B. C Butler

Collegiality and The Bishops' Synod

This is a consensus statement resulting from discussion of position papers delivered at an interdisciplinary symposium sponsored by the Canon Law Society of America, Bergamo Center for Renewal and the University of Dayton, in preparation for the Synod of Bishops which convened in Rome on October 11. The meeting was held at Dayton, Ohio, Sept. 10-12.

I. PREAMBLE

As People of God, clergy and laity, concerned that the Church accomplish its mission in the modern world, we wish to express our gratitude to Pople Paul VI for establishing the Synod of Bishops as an expression of collegiality rooted in the Gospels, in tradition and developed by the Second Vatican Council. The initiative of the Pope has given all men increasing hope for the continued growth and orderly renewal of the Church.

When Pope Paul established the synod, he said that it like all human institutions "can be still more perfected with the passage of time" (*Apostolica Sollicitudo* n. 1). In our judgment the time has come to give the Synod of Bishops a more permanent form so that the collegial nature of the Church may be more adequately realized and more effectively accomplished.

Collegiality

The doctrine of collegiality expressed in the Constitution on the Church n. 22 teaches that bishops who are united to the Pope and to their fellow bishops in hierarchical communion constitute a collegial body possessing supreme power in governing the Church. Such power is exercised not only when the college is united in an ecumenical council

such as Vatican II, but it also may be exercised through other forms of appropriate collegial action such as an episcopal synod. But an episcopal synod should have the bishops in full collaboration with the Pope in view of their collegial prerogatives, not merely as advisers or consultants as the present synod of bishops is constituted.

II. THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

The Church is necessarily collegial in its structure and government because it is collegial in its nature and in its biblical origins.

Collegiality is, in its first and deepest meaning, a matter of community. The Church is a *communio* brought together and sustained by the Holy Spirit. The Church, as community, comes into being in its most visible form when it gathers for the celebration of the Eucharist at the level of the local assembly. But this local church is not merely an administrative unit within a larger corporate entity; it is a living cell containing the whole mystery of the one Body of Christ. Within these local churches there has always existed a close bond among bishops, presbyters and deacons, and the community as a whole, and this fraternal relationship is a principal basis for the apostolicity of each community.

There have also existed important links among the various local churches: bishop with bishop, and community with community. It is clear from very early liturgical testimony (e.g., the consecration of a bishop by several other bishops rather than by one alone), that the individual bishop could have his episcopacy in no other way than in communion with the other bishops.

The Church is a *communio ecclesiarum*,

a fraternity of local churches brought together by the Spirit into a single body. The history of the Catholic Church, in large measure, is the record of balancing one value against the other, of preserving the integrity of the local church (apostolicity) without diminishing the unity of the Church universal (catholicity).

Order and Structure

The mission of the Church, whether of proclaiming the Word of God, of celebrating the sacraments, or of ministering to the needs of mankind in the world for the sake of the Kingdom of God, presupposes and requires both order and structure, not only as a sign of internal unity but also for a more coherent and effective exercise of this mission. The unity of the Church and the fruitfulness of its mission is assured interiorly by the presence of the Spirit, and exteriorly by the presence of the college of bishops within the Church, and by the Pope as the principle of unity within the college.

The Pope, however, never acts as a purely private person when he acts as head of the Church. He is always head of the college and a member thereof. The primacy of the Pope is a primacy within rather than over against the episcopal college. The Church is governed by a college in such ways that the Pope is not the mere instrument of the college, while the college is not merely his executive organ. Indeed, the Catholic Church does not recognize the Pope to be its absolute monarch, nor the bishops as the mere delegates of the Pope.

The supreme and full power for governing the Church, in view of its higher mission for the sake of the Kingdom of God, has been conferred upon the whole college. This power is exercised in different modes and forms, but it is radically one.

First Vatican Council

It was clearly not the intent of the First Vatican Council to propose a doctrine of the papacy that might be prejudicial to the rights and responsibilities of the bishops. This judgment is verified by the joint Declaration of the German Hierarchy in 1875. Herein it is assessed that the council did

not teach that episcopal jurisdiction is absorbed into papal jurisdiction or that the Pope in principle has taken the place of every individual bishop. Significantly, Pope Pius IX approved this statement of the German bishops as expressing "the true meaning of the Vatican decrees" and preventing the faithful from "forming a false idea of them."

This interpretation is further strengthened by the documents of the Second Vatican Council. Without prejudice to the rights and prerogatives of the Pope, "all the bishops in hierarchical communion share in the responsibility for the universal Church" (Decree on the Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church, n. 5), and are thereby "the subject of supreme and full power over the universal Church" (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, n. 22).

The testimony of Vatican II faithfully reflects the converging insights of biblical, liturgical, canonical, and theological scholarship: the Church must be collegial in structure and government because it is collegial in its nature and origins, and history records numerous examples of collegial action in every age of the Church's life.

III. PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE SYNOD

In this light we make the following recommendations:

1. That the ordinary Synod of Bishops as described in n. V of the *motu proprio* "Apostolica Sollicitudo" of Pope Paul VI, meet regularly according to its norms of proportionate representation. In view of the present crises facing the church in this post-conciliar period we recommend that this regular meeting be on an annual or bi-annual basis.

2. That the Pope personally participate as often as possible in the actual working sessions of the synod in order that its collegial nature be more effectively realized.

3. That national conferences of bishops mutually collaborate with the Holy See in determining matters to be placed on the agenda for each synod session.

4. That the permanent synod secretariat work in continuous collaboration with national conferences, with offices of the Ro-

man curia and with the newly formed international commission of theologians.

5. That the accepted conclusions of the synod be implemented as matters of the church's top priority.

6. That secrecy, since it often breeds mistrust, suspicion and lack of confidence be imposed only when absolutely necessary. The People of God, both clergy and laity, have a right to adequate information both as to matters on the agenda and the discussions of the synod as well as the final decisions.

IV. PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE HOLY SEE AND NATIONAL CONFERENCES

We recommend that relations between the Holy See and the national conferences be improved by implementing the following proposals:

1. Liaison between the Pope and the national conferences should be maintained through the president of each conference who should report directly to the Holy Father on the condition of the particular church.

2. Matters of universal importance should be promulgated to the People of God through the synod in order to insure proper consultation and effective implementation.

3. National conferences should answer the call of the Holy See by providing some of their own members and other competent personnel to further the internationalization of the Roman curia.

4. Since bishops through the Holy Spirit are pastors and true, authentic teachers of the faith, reservation of decision-making to central authority can be justified only by the needs of the universal Church.

Even such apparently necessary reservations should be modified if two-thirds of the bishops of a national conference request it because of pressing local conditions.

5. With the pastoral needs of today's Church urgently calling for a fuller use of modern means of communication, it is imperative that the Holy See in conjunction with national conferences work out programs which would include evaluating current trends, counseling decision-makers as

well as providing accurate information inside and outside the church.

V. THE APPLICATION OF SUBSIDIARITY: A RESTORATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

It is of highest importance that the Synod of Bishops adopt principles of administrative reform which effect a new division of labor and establish new levels of responsibility. The dedicated contribution of the Roman See to the unity and catholicity of the universal Church and the integrity of faith must be gladly acknowledged. At the same time, the needs of persons in all areas of the Church today call for new efforts of pastoral care and guidance. The enormous growth and complexity of the Church, as well as regional and cultural variety, require effective implementation of the principles of subsidiarity, collegiality and co-responsibility in all orders of the faithful, so that the mission of Christ among men may be fulfilled.

Among the principles of reform none is more urgent than the restoration to the particular churches of their ancient freedom to adapt the discipline of the Christian life and ministry to the needs of their own people. To do this with confidence, alacrity, and an adequate sense of accountability to the legitimate needs and aspirations of the faithful entrusted to them, the leadership of the particular churches must be able to take full responsibility for the direct pastoral care of persons and groups. Such restoration will lift a weight of detail from the Roman See, insure freedom and justice to the particular communities within the Church, and assist Christians to realize their present initiatives and expectations of witness and service.

Local Competencies

The following areas of decision are listed as examples of the types of competency that should no longer be exercised on a universal level but rather through the episcopal conferences in the particular churches.

1. The procedures for selecting bishops. The role of the Holy See should be one of

confirmation or approval, not direct appointment.

2. The institution of provincial, regional, and national councils.

3. The discipline of the clergy and the general organization of the priestly life and ministry.

4. The ways and institutions of participation by the laity in decision-making.

5. Procedures and norms to be followed in the resolution of marriage cases and cases wherein persons seek leave to change their status in the Church, and generally all decisions bearing upon the rights and obligations of persons as individuals.

6. Judicial processes and procedural law for criminal and contentious causes. These should correspond to the traditions and sense of fairness of the people of the particular church. Nevertheless, the right of the faithful to ultimate appeal to the Roman See and its tribunals ought to be safeguarded.

7. Decisions affecting the liturgical, devotional, and ascetical practices of the faithful.

8. Questions bearing upon the apostolic activities of supra-diocesan institutions.

9. The administration of ecclesiastical goods and properties. ■

Authority, Collaboration and Service

Bishop Lawrence B. Casey

In the November, 1967 issue of "Guide," we published a paper by Bishop Casey, on new structures in the diocese of Paterson, N.J., for the renewed Church. This second paper is a column in the diocesan paper, "THE BEACON," issue for Sept. 24, 1969, in which Bishop Casey discusses plans for a diocesan synod.

During Vatican Council II, the bishops of the world got to know one another better. Each day we rode together to and from the Council sessions in buses, usually with a different partner, and talked about Rome and home. I found the bishops very human, essentially a group of pastors like their brother priests who were working in the parishes at home.

Unable to see the Council in its full perspective because they were then actually a part of it, the bishops were not entirely aware of the many powerful forces that were set in motion when Pope John XXIII

convoled it. Since that time many people have expressed the wish that things could be just the way they were before Vatican II. They regret that the Council ever took place. I couldn't disagree more. I think it was providential that John *did* convoke the Council and set those forces in motion. If he had not, the Church would be unable to cope with conditions as they now exist, both within her own community and outside of it.

Some would question whether the Church is coping with the present situation, and I admit that a glance at the current scene brings to mind some lines written by William Butler Yeats over thirty years ago:

"Things fall apart; the center cannot hold,

Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world.
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere

The ceremony of innocence is drowned.
The best lack all conviction, while the worst

Are full of passionate intensity."

This is certainly a gloomy and foreboding observation, and if it does indeed apply with any truth to today's troubled world, how can the Church face up to the problem of serving today's man? What is a bishop to do, and how can he work in concert with the clergy, religious and laity entrusted to his care for the good of all? These are some of the questions I would like to take up with you. If the column is longer than usual, it is because the issues are of monumental importance.

GOD AND MAN

For many who are involved in today's socio-philosophical revolution, its essential theme is the supremacy of man: "No one stands above man, not even God." A large number of committed religious people who are also deeply involved in the socio-philosophical revolution do not agree. They stand instead with Vatican II which emphasized the dignity of man — but always in his relationship to God.

A pivotal statement of the Council's "Declaration on Religious Freedom" reads: "A sense of the dignity of the human person has been impressing itself more and more deeply on the consciousness of contemporary man. And the demand is increasingly made that men should act on their own judgment, enjoying and making use of responsible freedom, not driven by coercion but motivated by a sense of duty." This statement and the Declaration itself have given impetus to much of the present ferment in the Church.

Along with its emphasis on the dignity of the human person, Vatican II, the most pastoral of all the general councils, also accented service, a service that would reach out to all men. Its concern was with persons rather than with institutions.

Cardinal John Dearden, elected head of the United States bishops, put these two truths in focus during his opening address to the bishops at the Houston meeting last April: "In a day when the dignity of the person is valued so highly, we who in our faith have an understanding of that worth in Christ must be the first to recognize it. To respect the person, to help him understand himself better, to aid him to ap-

preciate and fulfill his responsibilities before God and man, to offer encouragement and understanding to the young, to show compassion to all—these are our duties. And the bewildered, the uncertain and the frightened have a claim on us side by side with the impatient, the impetuous and the demanding. However difficult the task, we are called to reach out to them as Christ would do."

A bishop must be eminently concerned about everything that involves human beings, and he must have a special concern for those who are struggling to pull themselves out of the depths of poverty and despair in which they have been kept by injustice and bigotry. To be a bishop means both to bring Christ into contact with the people he serves and to encounter Christ in them.

AUTHORITY A SERVICE

"Authority," said Father John Courtney Murray, "therefore stands, as it were, within the community as a ministry to be performed in the service of the community." Today, the concept of the bishop as servant is being restored to its full meaning. According to this concept, authority is more horizontal than vertical; it can never become exclusively one or the other. Authority acts within the community rather than above it; it is to be pastoral, not autocratic. Obviously, a bishop could never hope to accomplish anything substantial without the help and cooperation of those whom he serves. In fact, he has nothing to accomplish as bishop apart from a people to serve.

Power is always a source of danger to those who possess it. Cardinal Newman said that "it tends to destroy the gentler virtues." Nothing makes a leader wiser in judgment or more prudent in action than the prospect of legitimate criticism to which he must listen. When power is exercised without provisions for checks and balances, there is the danger that a habit of domination and a spirit of intolerance will develop. The growing demand for a practical procedure of due process within the Church is a symptom of this desire for checks and balances. I believe that this is a wholesome sign of brotherly concern for justice and

charity in our mutual relationships within the Church.

A bishop does a lot of listening these days. The bishop who seeks the counsel and collaboration of others does not thereby abdicate the legitimate authority he has by reason of his office. The emphasis today must be placed on convictions reached and implemented through dialogue, not arbitrary force.

On the local level, the Priests' Senate, the Sisters' Council, the Diocesan Lay Council and the Urban Task Force do not threaten episcopal authority. I've found during the past two years that their only concern is to help the bishop make the Church a greater force for good in the three counties of our diocese. They complement the bishop's work admirably. Some recent movements and projects of greatest benefit to the diocese have come into being entirely on the initiative of these four groups and of others like them.

SHARING EXPERIENCE AND INFORMATION

Many minds are better than one, even when that one has the power—and the duty—to make the ultimate decision. Today it is necessary to set up procedures that will involve many persons in the decision-making process. We have done this to some extent, and we must continue to explore new ways to improve our methods of collaboration. This process, in the words of Cardinal Dearden, "entails no dilution of authority, no abandonment of authority. On the contrary, it means the more intelligent use of authority through the collaboration of those who [with the bishop] are the Church. We are looking for the day when responsible membership in the Church will call for a degree of sharing in responsibility greater than we have known."

The four local groups mentioned above are no rubber-stamp organizations. The members are free to speak up, to agree or disagree, and to give reasons. The discussions which follow usually produce a workable compromise of method, but not of fundamental principles or of anyone's integrity. Ordinarily, there is substantial agreement upon what, in any given in-

stance, is best for the Church and for all concerned. I've walked away from the meetings of these groups with the heartening knowledge that the people involved were working harmoniously with their bishop, despite some differences of opinion.

Today a bishop has to reappraise constantly the structures existing within the "diocesan institution." It is important that this reappraisal be carried forward here in our own diocese. Christ's teachings and His people's needs provide us with the criteria for such a reappraisal. Some structures will survive with little or no change; others, which do not meet present needs, will not survive at all; still others will be changed. A bishop cannot follow the policy: "We've always done it that way." This course of action won't work in today's fast-changing world. We have to examine new approaches.

One way to reach those approaches, I believe, is through a diocesan synod, and for this reason I have initiated preparatory work for such a synod. Simply defined, a synod is a Church convention. One of its main purposes is to establish policies, make laws, and lay down guidelines which are to govern the life of the Church in a particular diocese. Before our plans can come to fruition, the cooperation and counsel of our priests, religious, laymen and laywomen, young and old, must be sought. It's going to be a major task for all of us, and it may take several years.

PREPARATION FOR LOCAL SYNOD

Setting up a successful synod will involve an extensive process of education. We must study together so that we can come to an understanding of what the Church is and how it is to meet the needs of the people in our day. Each of us must learn more about the nature of the Church and our own particular role within the Church. Our common aim is to form a kind of community wherein the people of the diocese will realize their full measure of freedom and dignity as sons of God, and their responsibilities toward one another. The course of the diocese in the years immediately ahead will be shaped by the synod. Pray that the Spirit will guide all of us in this work.

Books Received

God, Jesus, and Spirit
Ed. Daniel Callahan
Herder and Herder. \$8.50

During 1967 and 1968, *Commonweal* devoted three issues to the current theological thinking on the three topics which make up the title of this volume. Many of the most distinguished scholars of our day contributed papers of an unusually high quality. This single volume brings these essays together in handy, manageable form. Twenty-nine papers are included, along with the introduction of the editor, and they provide an impressive, helpful reference book.

The Roman Catholic Church
John L. McKenzie
Holt, Rinehart and Winston. \$6.95

A reviewer can be immensely grateful that Father McKenzie wrote this book, recommending it warmly to others, yet still find it a difficult volume to classify. It is not a summary of Catholic teaching, like the *Dutch Catechism*; nor is it a work on the Church in the manner of Hans Kung. The writer himself confesses that it was a difficult book to write, remarking wryly "no failure was ever achieved with greater effort."

But few readers will judge it a failure. The McKenzie wit, scholarship, honesty and pungent phrase are all there. The largest section deals with the structures of the Church, with shorter parts devoted to worship, Catholic belief and the activity of the Church. Always looking at the facts of history, he endeavors to describe topics with reference to their doctrinal, organizational, moral and canonical aspects. And his judgmental, prophetic and speculating observations are what we have learned to expect from him.

The writer's earlier volume on Authori-

ty is here elucidated greatly. This is especially the case where he discusses matters like the growth and development of the papacy, the question of papal and conciliar interaction, and the currently crucial relationship of episcopal and papal authority. Interesting pages are devoted to the role of the laity.

Few books bring so many facts together, and critical evaluation of the facts, regarding the central problem of how "Roman" we have become. Where this has been necessary and healthy and where it represents an imbalance, is something every Catholic must ponder in these days of renewal.

The Church and Colonialism
Dom Helder Camara
Dimension Books. \$5.95

The continent of South America, our close neighbor, is seething with discontent. And few church leaders have labored so persistently and courageously to bring the teachings of the Gospel to bear on Latin American problems as the writer, who is archbishop of Olinda and Recife in Brazil.

This book is a collection of the public speeches of this advocate of Christian justice in which he expounds his sincere convictions. While he urges peaceful means to eradicate economic and social inequalities, he is eloquent in opposing that institutionalized violence by which the "have" nations exploit the "have-nots" and the wealthy within the poor nations keep millions in sub-human conditions.

Dom Helder will dialogue with anybody who will listen: rightists and leftists—he even gave an interview for *L'Osservatore Romano*, which it failed to publish. But he is always laboring for the poor. "Like Christ," he affirms, "I must have special love of the poor." And while understanding and even honoring the revolution-

ary, he asserts, "I would prefer a thousand times to be killed rather than to kill." And he asks questions which are disturbing: "How long will nuclear bombs be more powerful than the poverty bomb which is forming the Third World?"

Meeting God in Man

Ladislau Boros, S.J.

Herder and Herder. \$4.50

This is a book for reflective reading on some "existential significant virtues" that are paths to intimacy with God. The writer stresses certain basic truths, many of them traditional, but always with contemporary insights and in our present idiom.

To find God, one must strive to be a real man. The truly authentic man was Jesus Christ, God and man, truly God as the unique Son of the Father, yet fully human too. This Christ has associated himself with each of us in a union of love, and must become central in each life if we are to reach our richest fulfillment. And the shortest route to be identified with Christ is to identify with my neighbor.

The merit of this book is that it applies the ancient social virtues to the patterns which modern life constantly offer to us. The sanctity it inculcates is one with that practiced by good men through the ages. Yet the writer's background in current theology, philosophy and psychology enables him to discuss these virtues in the light of the turbulent world in which we actually live.

It may be that the book loses something of its original quality in the translation. But a thoughtful, prayerful reader will find here much to savor and practice. A valuable contribution to new directions in spirituality.

The Ecumenical Revolution

Robert McAfee Brown

Doubleday Anchor-Image Book. \$1.95

This is a revised and expanded paperback edition of the valuable book written three years ago by this American ecumenist. Much new material has been added; some chapters are completely new, and others considerably expanded.

The writer admits that the kind of ecumenism which concentrates on "domestic" church affairs has seen a decline. But he affirms strongly that a richer sort of ecumenism is gaining momentum. "It is an ecumenism," he writes "that the church exists for the sake of the world, not for its own sake, and that whatever happens within it must be seen not as an end in itself but only as equipping it to live a more authentic life of servanthood to the whole family of man."

The current world revolution; the crisis of authority in the Roman Catholic Church; the growing consensus (despite real differences) on the part of Protestant and Roman Catholic ecumenists—are other factors which impelled the writer to update his earlier work.

One can only applaud the decision of this learned, informed Christian to undertake this most useful project. Nor does the new work lose anything of the freshness and verve of the original.

J.T.M.

GUIDE

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Guide Lights

EFFECTS OF SECULARIZATION . . .

Elsewhere in these pages the impact of secularization upon the crisis in the Church is described. However, there are many other ramifications to the secularizing process and it is worth dwelling upon some of them. They have important pastoral implications and while each of these effects is familiar enough, nevertheless we are not accustomed to thinking consciously in their terms in the discharge of our pastoral responsibilities. As a matter of fact a good deal of church planning and programming operates upon an entirely different set of assumptions largely inherited from the past. When these are placed alongside the propositions I am going to list here, their incompatibility is startling. It is only by examining some of the far-reaching effects of secularization that we can intelligently take them into account in renewing the basic activities of the Church.

SOURCES OF RELIGIOUS VALUES . . .

There is a whole set of important values in the life of a Catholic that is not directly traceable to the Church. This is not a startling discovery but upon examination it should be evident that this applies to religious values as well as others. It is embarrassing but true that a good deal of the American Catholic's sense of justice and responsibility for others comes not so much from his religious training as it does from the best conscience of American society. This is not to say that these values are not enshrined within the Church's tradition, but rather that they become operative in the lives of many not through any response to the coaching of the Church but to the challenges and ideals of the secular society. This

is important because the individual so motivated is going to look to secular sources more and more for moral guidance because of his previous satisfying experience with that authority. In addition to these obviously religious values, there is a whole host of satellite values which are almost exclusively derived from secular sources. Such things as the Protestant work ethic, the value of usefulness, the American sense of fairness, the search for a moral ground for all significant action,—all these, whatever one may think of their intrinsic merits, are values that are more or less accepted and subscribed to at least as worthy ideals, by the American Catholic. They have their counterparts within his specifically religious tradition, but their impact and persuasion is linked for him to his secular life. Somehow in inculcating her values, the Church must take this into account, and relate herself in some authentic way to the secular teaching.

THE CATHOLIC CHOICE . . .

Today a Catholic chooses whether to be a Christian or not. Again the truth of this statement is obvious upon reflection but in practice we are not in the habit of treating this choice as a real one. In fact, until recently it was scarcely seen as a genuine exercise of freedom at all and the Catholic expectation was that the choice would inevitably be an affirmative one. If it wasn't then something was wrong with the person who chose otherwise. We no longer live, and have not for some time, in the kind of climate that made Christianity a significant part of the life of every man whether he actually believed or not. Our society is so obviously secular that the only way in which the Church can claim a real commitment from anyone is on the basis of free choice. The full recognition of this by parents, teachers and pastors is going to be difficult and there are many emotional,

attitudinal, and faulty theological obstacles that must be resolved before this effect of secularization can become an operating principle in the life of the Church.

UNSCRAMBLING THE BROADCAST . . .

The language in which religious values are received is not clear and uninterrupted. Rather it is a language spoken in a forum in which many other languages are bringing many other messages to the same person simultaneously. The learning process today, whether it be religious learning or otherwise, demands an ability on the part of the learner to unscramble the significant portions of each particular message amidst the clash of competing broadcasts and against a background of continual noise. Learning in such a forum becomes a complex of listening, weighing, testing, playing off one value against others, filtering proffered values through experience, etc. It calls for a very delicate balancing and juggling of the new as it ricochets in unforeseen ways off the old. This is one reason why in religious education it is so important to have the learner do most of the work. Ultimately if he is to internalize these values and make them his own this kind of critical assimilation is a necessity, given the milieu in which the average American lives. Perhaps he might be helped in the process if the religious educators became better interpreters, and sometimes critics of the values they personally hold as Americans as well as the religious values it falls to their lot to communicate as catechists. It is always helpful for the student to have a model before him of someone who has gone through the same process he now faces.

COMMITMENT IN STAGES . . .

The acceptance of Christian values and indeed of the Christian faith is in stages, tentative at first, dependent upon further testing and personal adjustment before full personal commitment. This is really a corollary of the preceding postulate. In the kind of learning process that is inescapable in secular society it is unreasonable to expect a full commitment even when the inherent truth and attractiveness of religious values are clearly recognized. Secularization has spawned an enduring pluralism of ultimates. The presence of a wide variety of choice in this area inevitably conditions

people against finality in their choices. Not that choices *never* become final; they do, but only when the limits of tentative choice come to be experienced as an obstacle to further choice. However, the quality of tentativeness is pushed to its limits, and for a significant period of a person's life even his basic religious commitment will reflect it. It is only through a long term growth and maturing process that this characteristic disappears and a man's faith becomes fully integrated into his being.

THE TEST OF EXPERIENCE . . .

Ultimately, in a secular society, experience, fully open and non-predetermined, is the final test of all values, including the value of Christian faith. This is probably as true of American Catholics as it is of others less identified with an objective framework. It is a good example of traditional American pragmatism and probably sounds heretical, but it has merit. Indeed, even within the Catholic tradition experience emerges as the real ground of faith. The New Testament itself rests upon the experience the disciples had of the risen Christ. The same is true of the entire Old Testament reflecting as it does a people's experience of their saving God. And today the individual no less than his predecessors in faith finally believes because one way or another he has had an experience of God. However, the secularization process complicates this kind of test because it introduces into it a host of autonomous variables that are not obviously a part of a man's faith experience. Yet, because they are powerful broadcasters within the culture, they exert considerable influence in rating faith's performance. In other words, even when the religious commitment is made the modern believer keeps an eye cocked on how his faith shapes up to the changing but ever critical standards of secular society. What the effect of this ultimately is upon his faith is hard to tell, but this watchdog function of the culture is all embracing and even has a part in faith acceptance. To live under this kind of scrutiny is never an easy thing for the Church and perhaps a realistic openness to the collective secular experience, an openness that is neither defensive nor subservient, is the ideal for today's guardians of faith.

JOSEPH V. GALLAGHER, C.S.P.